

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 and 26-45 are pending in the application upon entry of the amendments and new claim. Claims 1, 6, 23, 27, 31, and 35 have been amended for consistency and to better describe certain aspects of the invention. Claim 45 has been added to further describe the invention. Claim 25 has been cancelled. Favorable reconsideration in light of the amendments, the new claim, and the remarks which follow is respectfully requested.

The Amendments and Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner's indication that claims 6, 19-22, 24, 25, 28, 31, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 43, and 44 contain allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 6. Claim 6 has been amended. Independent claim 23 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 25. Claim 25 has consequently been cancelled. Independent claim 27 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 31. Claim 31 has been amended. Independent claim 35 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claims 42 and 43. New independent claim 45 contains the subject matter of independent claim 1 and dependent allowable claim 20.

The Obviousness Rejections

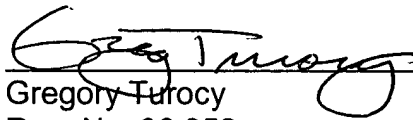
Claims 1-5, 7-12, 14-18, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 37, 39, and 41 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Scheitinger (U.S. Patent 5,769,540) in view of Schreutelkamp (APL). Claim 13 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Scheitinger in view of Schreutelkamp further in view of Hause (U.S. Patent 6,166,354). In view of the amendments above, the obviousness rejections are rendered moot since the cited art does not teach or suggest all of the features of the independent claims.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

In the event any fees are due in connection with the filing of this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1063.

Respectfully submitted,

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